

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 207232

FOLLOWING REPEAT MOSCOW 17407 ACTION SECSTATE
INFO LENINGRAD 25 JUL 78.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 17407

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PINT, UR, US, CVIS
SUBJECT: KORNIYENKO ON THE PENTECOSTALISTS IN THE EMBASSY

1. DURING HIS JULY 25 CALL ON ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER
KORNIYENKO ON ANOTHER MATTER, THE AMBASSADOR RAISED THE
PROBLEM OF THE SEVEN PENTECOSTALISTS PRESENTLY RESIDING
IN THE EMBASSY'S CONSULAR SECTION. THE AMBASSADOR SAID
THAT AS KORNIYENKO WAS AWARE, IT WAS NOT THE EMBASSY'S
POLICY TO USE FORCE IN EVICTING VISITORS, BUT THEIR
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CONTINUED PRESENCE ON EMBASSY PREMISES WAS BECOMING A
HEAVY BURDEN ON THE EMBASSY AND ITS STAFF. AMBASSADOR
WOULD BE GRATIFIED FOR THE MINISTRY'S ASSISTANCE IN
THE EMBASSY'S CONTINUING EFFORT TO PERSUADE THE PENTE-
COSTALISTS TO LEAVE. IN PARTICULAR, WE WOULD APPRECIATE
HAVING THE MINISTRY'S ASSURANCES, PREFERABLY IN WRITING
IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, THAT (A) THE PENTECOSTALISTS WILL

NOT SUFFER REPRISALS FOR THEIR ENTRY AND STAY IN THE EMBASSY AND (B) THEIR APPLICATIONS TO EMIGRATE WILL BE GIVEN DUE CONSIDERATION, IN ACCORD WITH USUAL SOVIET PRACTICE.

2. KORNIYENKO RESPONDED THAT THE EMBASSY SHOULD HAVE TAKEN MEASURES LONG AGO TO HAVE THE PENTECOSTALISTS LEAVE. THE EMBASSY HAD NO BASIS TO ASK FOR ASSURANCES; THE INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED WERE, AFTER ALL, SOVIET CITIZEN IF THEY HAVE DONE NOTHING AGAINST SOVIET LAW, THEY WILL NOT BE PUNISHED. REGARDING THEIR DESIRE TO EMIGRATE, ANY APPLICATION TO LEAVE THE USSR IS GIVEN "DUE CONSIDERATION," WITHOUT QUESTION. BUT ONE COULD NOT SAY THAT THE APPLICATIONS OF THE PENTECOSTALISTS WILL BE

CONSIDERED POSITIVELY; THIS DEPENDS UPON THE APPROPRIATE LOCAL AUTHORITIES. IT IS UP TO THE EMBASSY, KORNIYENKO CONCLUDED, TO FIND A WAY FOR THESE PEOPLE TO LEAVE THE EMBASSY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

3. IN A GRATUITOUS ASIDE, CHIEF OF THE MFA USA DIVISION KOMPLEKTOV ADDED THAT THE PENTECOSTALISTS' PROLONGED STAY IN THE EMBASSY MADE IT LOOK LIKE THE EMBASSY WAS DETAINING THEM. THE AMBASSADOR TOOK SHARP AND SERIOUS EXCEPTION TO KOMPLEKTOV'S INSINUATION, NOTING THAT FROM THE OUTSET THE EMBASSY'S CONCERN WAS TO RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM AS QUICKLY AS CIRCUMSTANCES ALLOWED.

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4. THE AMBASSADOR CONCLUDED THIS PORTION OF THE MEETING BY REGRETTING THAT THE SOVIET SIDE COULD NOT BE OF MORE ASSISTANCE IN THIS MATTER.

5. COMMENT: KORNIYENKO'S REMARKS MAKE CLEAR THAT THE SOVIETS ARE NOT GOING TO BE HELPFUL IN THIS CASE, AT LEAST AS FAR AS ASSURANCES ARE CONCERNED. WE THUS HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO CONTINUE OUR EFFORTS TO PERSUADE THE PENTECOSTALISTS TO LEAVE VOLUNTARILY. IN OUR NEXT APPROACH TO THEM, WE PLAN TO INFORM THEM THAT THE AMBASSADOR HAS DISCUSSED THEIR CASE WITH THE ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER AND THE LATTER HAS STATED THAT THEY WILL NOT BE PUNISHED IF THEY HAVE NOT VIOLATED SOVIET LAW, AND THEIR APPLICATIONS FOR EXIT PERMISSION WILL BE GIVEN DUE CONSIDERATION. THIS IS ADMITTEDLY THIN GRUEL FOR THE PENTECOSTALISTS BUT WE HAVE LITTLE ELSE TO OFFER. TOON

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